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EXAMINER	
MORRISON, JAY A	

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2168	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/694,367

Applicant(s)

ZHANG, BIN

Examiner

Jay A. Morrison

Art Unit

2168

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 August 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 9-14 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 15, 17-22, 24-28 and 30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-8, 16, 23 and 29 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Reopen Prosecution

1. In view of the Appeal Brief filed on 4/9/07, prosecution is hereby reopened. A new ground of rejection is set forth below.

To Avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

- 1) File a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this office action is a non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this office action is a final); or
- 2) Request reinstatement of the appeal.

If reinstatement of the appeal is requested, such request must be accompanied by a supplemental appeal brief, but no new amendments, affidavits (37 CFR 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132) or other evidence are permitted. See 37 CFR 1.193(b)(2).

Remarks

2. Claims 1-30 are pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 9-14 are allowed.
4. Claims 2-8, 16, 23, 29 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Zheng et al. ('K-Harmonic Means – A Data Clustering Algorithm', HP Laboratories Palo Alto, October, 1999) ('Zheng' hereinafter).

As per claim 24, Zheng teaches

"A system, comprising:" (see abstract)

"a plurality of data sources each having a processor configured to access datapoints within the respective data source" (data mining, page 1, Abstract);

"mine the datapoints of the data sources as a whole without transferring all of the datapoints between the data sources and the central station to thereby determine a pattern in datapoints contained in said data sources" (data mining, page 1, Abstract).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 1,15,17-22,24-28 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zheng et al. ('K-Harmonic Means – A Data Clustering Algorithm', HP Laboratories Palo Alto, October, 1999) ('Zheng' hereinafter) in view of Arning et al ('Arning' hereinafter) (Publication Number 2003/0145000).

As per claim 1, Zheng teaches

"A processor-based method comprising:" (see abstract)

"selecting a set number of functions correlating variable parameters of a dataset"

(pages 1-2, section 1);

"and clustering the dataset by iteratively applying a ... algorithm and a K-Harmonic Means performance function on the set number of functions to determine a pattern in said dataset" (pages 3-4, section 3).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regression".

However, Arning discloses "regression" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of

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"regression" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 15, Zheng teaches

"A system, comprising:" (see abstract)

"an input port configured to receive data" (page 1, Abstract);

"functions correlating variable parameters of a set of the data" (pages 4-5, section 5);

"cluster the functions using a K-Harmonic Mean performance function" (pages 3-4, section 3);

"and repeat said ... and cluster sequentially to thereby determine a pattern in said set of data" (pages 4-5, section 5).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regress".

However, Arning discloses "regress" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of "regress" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 17, Zheng teaches

"compute common coefficient vectors which compensate for variations between the ... clustered functions representing the datasets, and wherein each of the processors of the data sources is configured to alter the functions by the common coefficient vectors" (pages 4-5, section 5).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regressively".

However, Arning discloses "regressively" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of "regressively" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 18, Zheng teaches

"A system, comprising:" (see abstract)

"a plurality of data sources" (data mining, page 1, Abstract);

"and a means for ... clustering datapoints from the plurality of data sources without transferring data between the plurality of data sources to thereby determine a pattern in data contained in said data sources" (pages 3-4, section 3).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regressively".

However, Arning discloses "regressively" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of

“regressively” would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 19, Zheng teaches

“the means for regressively clustering the datasets comprises a means for applying a regression algorithm and a K-Harmonic Means performance function on the datasets” (pages 3-4, section 3).

As per claim 20, Zheng teaches

“the means for regressively clustering the datasets comprises a means for applying a regression algorithm and a K-Means performance function on the datasets” (pages 1-2, section 1; pages 3-4, section 3).

As per claim 21, Zheng teaches

“the means for regressively clustering the datasets comprises a means for applying a ... algorithm and an Expectation Maximization performance function on the datasets” (pages 1-2, section 1; pages 3-4, section 3).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate “regression”.

However, Arning discloses “regression” (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of

"regression" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 22, Zheng teaches

"collecting dataset information at the central station from the plurality of data sources" (data mining, page 1, Abstract);

"determining a common coefficient vector from the collected dataset information" (pages 4-5, section 5);

"and altering datasets within the plurality of data sources by the common coefficient vector" (pages 4-5, section 5).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regression".

However, Arning discloses "regression" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of "regression" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 25, Zheng teaches

"each of the processors within the plurality of data sources is configured to ... cluster a dataset within the respective data source" (pages 3-4, section 3).

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Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regressively".

However, Arning discloses "regressively" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of "regressively" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 26, Zheng teaches

"collect information pertaining to the ... clustered datasets" (pages 4-5, section 5);

"and based upon the collected information, calculate common coefficient vectors which balance variations between functions correlating similar variable parameters of the ... clustered datasets" (page 4-5, section 5).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regressively".

However, Arning discloses "regressively" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of "regressively" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 27, Zheng teaches

"compute a residual error from the common coefficient vectors" (page 1, Abstract; pages 4-5, section 5);

"propagate the common coefficient vectors to the data sources upon computing a residual error value greater than a predetermined value" (page 1, Abstract; pages 4-5, section 5);

"and send a message to the data sources to terminate the ... clustering of the datasets upon computing a residual error value less than a predetermined value" (page 1, Abstract; pages 4-5, section 5).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regression".

However, Arning discloses "regression" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of "regression" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 28, Zheng teaches

"A processor-based method for mining data, comprising:" (see abstract)

"independently applying a regression clustering algorithm to a plurality of distributed datasets" (pages 3-4, section 3);

"developing matrices from probability and weighting factors computed from the ... clustering algorithm, wherein the matrices individually represent the distributed datasets without including all datapoints within the datasets" (pages 5-6, section 6);

"determining global coefficient vectors from a composite of the matrices" (pages 4-5, section 5);

"and multiplying functions correlating similar variable parameters of the distributed datasets by the global coefficient vectors to thereby determine a pattern in said datasets" (pages 4-5, section 5).

Zheng does not explicitly indicate "regression".

However, Arning discloses "regression" (paragraph [0026]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Zheng and Arning because using the steps of "regression" would have given those skilled in the art the tools to improve the invention by using current data mining techniques. This gives the user the advantage of having better returned results.

As per claim 30, Zheng teaches

"calculating a residue error associated with the global coefficients prior to said multiplying" (page 1, Abstract; pages 4-5, section 5).

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record, listed on form PTO-892, and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jay A. Morrison whose telephone number is (571) 272-7112. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim Vo can be reached on (571) 272-3642. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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